



MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Los Angeles River Center and Gardens
570 West Avenue Twenty-six, Suite 100
Los Angeles, California 90065
Phone (323) 221-9944 Fax (323) 221-9934

January 13, 2005

Rorie Skei
Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy
5750 Ramirez Canyon Road
Malibu, California 90265

Grant SMM-875, Mission Canyon Trailhead

Dear Rorie:

The MRCA respectfully requests approval of a change to the scope of work for grant #SMM-875, Mission Canyon Trailhead. MRCA requests that the scope of work be changed to allow acquisition of property in the Santa Monica Mountains.

As we have reported to the Conservancy in prior project status reports, the Mission Canyon Trailhead project has been on hold for over a year pending an agreement between the County of Los Angeles and the Sanitation District regarding the use of and access to the property. There is no indication that an agreement will be reached in the near future.

We completed preliminary designs for the Mission Canyon Trailhead in 2001, and it became clear that a signalized intersection with dedicated turn lanes on Sepulveda Boulevard was necessary to ensure safe vehicular access to and from the trailhead. The costs of building such an intersection would likely exceed \$100,000. The City of Los Angeles was planning a traffic improvement project for Sepulveda Boulevard that we had hoped to integrate with our improvements to reduce our costs. However, the City has decided not to go forward with their project. Construction of the intersection would also require extensive retaining walls. When these items are added to the estimated construction costs of the trailhead and nature center, the project total could well exceed \$2 million. The MRCA applied for a Transportation Enhancement Activities grant to help fund the project, but was not successful. At this time, the chances of securing the needed funding to complete the project seem unlikely.

The MRCA is currently pursuing acquisition of the Soka University property in the Santa Monica Mountains. Soka University is an approximately 588-acre property, that has been a top priority for open space preservation since the 1970s. The current owners want to sell, and there is no doubt that many developers would pay a premium for the property if the MRCA is unable to purchase. The MRCA requests that the scope of work for grant SMM-875 be changed so that the remaining funds may be used to acquire the Soka University property.

Ms. Rorie Skei
January 13, 2005
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Please respond to me at the above address indicating approval of the scope of work change at your earliest convenience, or by email at Cara.McLane@mrca.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cara McLane". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Cara McLane
Deputy Chief of Natural Resources and Planning
Contracts Officer

cc: Phyllis Lichtenstein